

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 3, 2002. Claims 22 to 58 and 66 to 75 are in the application, of which Claims 22 to 58 have been withdrawn and Claims 72 to 75 are new. Claims 66, 68 and 70, the independent claims under consideration, have been amended. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, Claims 66 to 71 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as allegedly being anticipated by admitted prior art as described in the specification. Specifically, the Office Action deemed inherent that service centers, service providers, and users would have telephones, and that ordinary telephones are considered terminals connected to a network. In response, the rejected claims have been amended so as to clarify that the user terminal receives image information from the service center and makes requests to the service center for a service relating to the image information, via a network.

The invention relates to the provision of a plurality of services over a network, in which image information is received at a user terminal from a service center, and a request for service is transmitted from the user terminal to the service center. The service request is forwarded from the user terminal to a service provider by the service center. Lists of items and their prices are stored by the service center, and service providers and the services provided by the service providers are also stored. The resulting charge for the service requested by the user terminal is calculated based upon referral to this stored information.

Among the features of the invention include (i) a user terminal which receives image information from a service center and requests a service relating to the

image information, and (ii) a service center which forwards the service request from the user terminal to a service provider for performing service and calculates the charge related to the requested service by referring to stored items including the services and their prices, and stored service providers and the items included in each service provided by the service providers.

With specific reference to the claims, independent Claim 66 is a method of providing a plurality of services over a network, where each of the services includes a plurality of items, which includes several steps. First, a user terminal receives image information via a network from a service center, and transmits a service request via the network to the service center, with the service request referring to the image information. Next, the service center forwards the service request to a service provider. Lastly, a charge relating to the service requested is calculated by referring to a first table, which stores items and their prices, and a second table, which stores service providers and items included in each service provided by the service provider.

Additionally, independent Claim 68 is a system of providing a plurality of services over a network, where each of the services includes one or more items, comprised of a user terminal for receiving image information via the network from a service center and transmitting a service request via the network to the service center, with the service request referring to the image information. The system also includes a service center for forwarding the service request received from the user terminal to a service provider, where the service center stores items and their prices in a first table, and service providers and a template for showing the one or more items included in the service provided by the service provider in a second table. The system calculates the charge of the service on the basis of

the prices stored in the first table by referring to the template stored in the second table in accordance with the service request from the user terminal.

In addition, independent Claim 70 is a service center apparatus for managing a plurality of services provided over a network, where each of the services consists of a plurality of items, including a transmission means for transmitting image information to a user terminal via the network, and a forwarding means for forwarding a service request received from the user terminal to a service provider. Also, the service center apparatus includes a first storage means for storing items and their prices, and a second storage means for storing the service providers of the one or more items included in the service provided by the service provider. The apparatus has a calculating means for calculating the charge of the service related to the service requested on the basis of the first and second storage means.

The allegedly admitted prior art is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of independent Claims 66, 68 or 70. More particularly, the allegedly admitted prior art is merely seen to disclose a service center, service provider and users which communicate via ordinary telephones. In that regard, the allegedly admitted prior art in no way is seen to disclose the features of (i) a user terminal which receives image information from a service center and requests service relating to the image information, and (ii) a service center which forwards the service request from the user terminal to a service provider for performing service and calculates the charge related to the requested service by referring to stored items including the services and their prices, and stored service providers and the items included in each service provided by the service providers.

The other rejected claims in this application depend from one or another of the independent claims discussed above, and, therefore are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reason. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual consideration or reconsideration, as the case may be, of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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APPENDIX

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE TO CLAIMS

66. (Amended) A method of providing a plurality of services over a network, wherein each of the services [comprises] includes of a plurality [one or more] of items, said method comprising the steps of:

[a service center receiving a service request from a user terminal;

the service center transmitting the service request from the user terminal to a service provider;]

a user terminal receiving image information via the network from a service center, and transmitting a service request via the network to the service center, with the service request referring to the image information; and

the service center forwarding the service request to a service provider;

wherein the service center stores items and their prices in a first table, stores [the] service providers and the one or more items included in each service provided by the service providers in a second table, and calculates the charge related to the service requested on the basis of information stored in the first and second tables [for providing a service and a template for showing the one or more items included in the service provided by the service provider in a second table, acquires the prices stored in the first table by referring to the template stored in the second table in accordance with the service request from the user terminal, and calculates the charge of the service on the basis of the acquired prices].

68. (Amended) A system of providing a plurality of services over a network, wherein each of the services includes [comprises] one or more items, said system comprising:

a user terminal for receiving image information via the network from [transmitting a service request to] a service center and transmitting a service request via the network to the service center, with the service request referring to said image information;

the service center [transmitting] for forwarding the service request received from the user terminal to a service provider;

wherein the service center stores items and their prices in a first table, stores the service provider for providing a service and a template for showing the one or more items included in the service provided by the service provider in a second table, acquires the prices stored in the first table by referring to the template stored in the second table in accordance with the service request from the user terminal, and calculates the charge of the service on the basis of the acquired prices.

70. (Amended) [An] A service center apparatus for managing a plurality of services provided over a network, wherein each of the services consists of a plurality of [comprises one or more] items, said apparatus comprising:

transmission means for transmitting image information to a user terminal via the network;

forwarding means for forwarding a service request received from the user terminal to a service provider;

[reception means for receiving a service request from a user terminal;

transmission means for transmitting the service request from the user terminal to a service provider;]

first storage means for storing items and their prices;

second storage means for storing the service providers for [providing a service and a template for showing] the one or more items included in the service provided by the service provider;

[acquisition means for acquiring the prices stored in the first table by referring to the template stored in the second storage means in accordance with the service request from the user terminal;] and

calculating means for calculating the charge of the service related to the service requested on the basis of the first and second storage [acquired by the acquisition] means.